

**EFFECTIVE**

November 1, 2009

**SUBJECT****Special \$25 UCB American Recovery and Reinvestment Act payment****All Programs**

The \$25 federal weekly American Recovery and Reinvestment Act applied to unemployment compensation benefits (UCB) and trade readjustment allowances (TRA) is excluded as income retroactively to November 1, 2009. A mass update will be started the weekend of February 13, 2010 and will finish in stages on or about February 28, 2010 to deduct the \$25 federal weekly UCB ARRA amount from all active cases. The update will be retroactive to November, 2009. If the client is due a supplement it will be automatically issued by Bridges.

There will be no change for the specialist. Bridges automatically deducts the \$25. Specialists must continue to enter the UCB and TRA using the gross amount.

When the mass updates are completed, a list of cases that had UCB and closed during the period of November through February and for cases that still have benefit mismatch as a result of conversion will be distributed. Specialists must re-evaluate these cases to determine if the client is due a supplement and issue if necessary. If a client inquires about a case that was denied because of UCB then their case must also be re-evaluated and opened if eligible.

**MA Only**

The \$25 UCB has already been excluded as income.

*Reason:* Federal mandate.

**Legal Base**

7 CFR 273.8 (e) (11)

7 CFR 273.9 (c) (10)

Section 2002 of ARRA (Assistance for Unemployed Workers and Struggling Families Act)

USDA memo dated 11/19/09 "Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP); Excluding \$25 Unemployment Compensation Payments from Income and Resources."

**EFFECTIVE**

**March 1, 2010**

**SUBJECT**

**Heat and Utility Standard Change**

**FAP**

**BEM 554**

All Food Assistance Program (FAP) cases will receive their first annual payment of \$1 in Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) funds. This allows all FAP cases to be eligible for the heat/utility (h/u) standard even if they do not have a responsibility to pay for heat, utilities or shelter expenses.

FAP cases determined eligible on or after March 1, 2010 will not receive their \$1 LIHEAP payment until later in the year. Regardless of when a household actually receives the \$1 LIHEAP payment, after March 1, 2010 all households will receive the h/u standard.

**L-letter (L-10-014)**

A detailed explanation of the \$1 LIHEAP process may be found in L-letter L-10-014.

**Bridges Screens**

A new question is added to the standard allowance details screen in Bridges and will automatically indicate that clients are eligible for the h/u standard when determining eligibility for months after February 2010. For all of the heat and utility expenses which require verification, Bridges will continue to request and pend for verification for months prior to March 2010.

You must continue to answer the questions on the standard allowance details screen and enter the appropriate verification source, if you have one (such as, utility bill, lease, etc., or client statement if you do not have verification). This screen must always be updated when expenses change. Should the \$1 LIHEAP initiative end, Bridges will have current information entered and will not send a verification checklist for any FAP cases with verified heat and utility expenses. This will decrease your future workload. Note: A verification checklist will not be generated for the FAP EDG even if the verification fields reflect "Client Statement" while the initiative is in effect.

Additionally, under the benefit issuance/view benefits tab the benefits summary screen will be updated to display the \$1 LIHEAP payment and the payment begin/end date will be 3/1/2010- 3/31/2010.

New initiative to increase FAP dollars coming into Michigan, further assist our clients and improve payment accuracy.

**MANUAL  
MAINTENANCE  
INSTRUCTIONS**